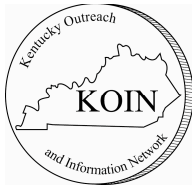


## **Kentucky Outreach and Information Network (KOIN) Fact Sheet**

### **What is the Kentucky Outreach and Information Network (KOIN)?**

Established in 2004, the KOIN is a growing grassroots network of resource people who serve as conduits of information in emergencies. These individuals have the trust of different populations (e.g. deaf/hard of hearing, blind or visually-impaired, non-native, limited English speaking individuals and those with low literacy levels, remote rural, elderly and disabled), which are normally harder to reach through mainstream media or normal communications channels. The KOIN also includes media members who have closer connections to these populations.



### **What is the goal of the KOIN?**

The goal of the KOIN is to ensure that in the event of a public health emergency, communication channels are in place and KOIN members understand their role in notifying individuals through appropriate channels. This network can also be utilized to protect the health of Kentucky citizens in day-to-day situations such as immunization clinics, diabetes education/screening or flu shot distribution. It was recently used in planning for Kentucky's Pandemic Influenza Summit to ensure members of these populations were invited to this important event.

### **What makes the KOIN different from other communication channels?**

Trust plays an important role in how people receive messages during a time of emergency. Research shows people tend to trust and rely on people they already know more than they rely on outside sources, such as the government or mainstream media.

### **How was the KOIN formed?**

A baseline study and interviews were conducted with individuals, agencies, media and institutions that could be in a position to assist Kentucky's Cabinet for Health and Family Services define the communication patterns among the state's special needs populations.

### **How is the KOIN database maintained?**

It is maintained on a simple database spreadsheet that can be easily maintained. It is also cross referenced into Microsoft Outlook distribution lists according to groups of specific special populations and specific locations in the state. This allows certain groups to be



targeted and reached via email notification. Those without email addresses are reached via telephone or word is spread from person-to-person.

**What types of activities and materials does the KOIN utilize?**

**Community workshops** are held annually to reinforce KOIN members and also to encourage potential members to join the network.

**Community Information Guides** are published and updated annually. The guides are given out at the community workshops to provide state disaster-related information.

**Media Information Guides** are published and updated annually. The guides contain information on disasters specific to media. Guides are given out to media members attending the workshops and are also mailed to statewide media outlets.

**Pocket Media Information Guides** are similar to the Media Information Guide, but are small enough to fit in a reporter's pocket if responding to an emergency.

**Brochures** outlining the Kentucky Department for Public Health's public health preparedness program are passed out to KOIN members.

**Folding Community Information Pocket Guide Cards** containing valuable disaster preparedness information as well as emergency contact numbers and special population information are also given to KOIN members.

**Refrigerator Magnets** containing important emergency contact numbers are provided to KOIN members.

**A KOIN Newsletter** is given to members to keep them informed of important issues related to the information network.

**The KOIN Web page** contains comprehensive information about the KOIN. An online automated KOIN sign-up is currently being developed.

**A KOIN exercise** will be held this year to test the effectiveness and efficiency of the KOIN network in disseminating information.

**Which types of organizations are included in the KOIN?**

The KOIN is comprised of a variety of organizations and individuals. Listed below is a sampling of the types of organizations currently included in the network:

Blind and Visually-Impaired

American Printing House for the Blind  
Bluegrass Council for the Blind  
Kentucky Office of the Blind, Education Cabinet  
Kentucky School for the Blind

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

Kentucky Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing  
Kentucky School for the Deaf

Disabled

Independence Place  
Kentucky Council on Developmental Disabilities  
Kentucky Department of Mental Health/Retardation  
Kentucky Protection and Advocacy  
Office of Vocational Rehabilitation  
VA Medical Center, Dept. of Military Affairs

Elderly

Kentucky Adult Day Care Facilities  
Kentucky Area Agencies on Aging  
Kentucky Long-Term Care Centers  
Regional Geriatric Education Centers

Low Literacy Levels

Bluegrass Literacy  
Kentucky Department of Education



Remote Rural

Area Development Districts  
HAM Radio Emergency Service Group  
Kentucky Fire Commission  
Kentucky State Police  
Rural Electric Cooperatives  
State Fire Rescue Coordinators  
Statewide Local and Regional Health  
Departments

Non-Native or Limited English Speaking

Americana Community Center  
Arab American Association  
Bluegrass Farms Chaplaincy  
Bluegrass Farm Worker Health Center  
Boat People S.O.S. (Vietnamese)  
Bosnian Community, Inc.  
Bowling Green International Center  
Division of Community-Based Services  
(DCBS) local offices

English as Second Language (ESL) State  
Board Members  
German American Association  
Hispanic/Latino Coalition of Louisville  
India Community Association  
Irish Society of Louisville  
Islamic Center  
Jamaican Association of Louisville  
Japanese American Society of Kentucky  
Jewish Family Multicultural Services  
Kentucky Department of Education  
Kentucky Refugee Ministries  
Muslim Association of Louisville  
Office of International Affairs  
Organization of Chinese Americans  
Spanish Services Coordinator, Lexington  
Public Library Outreach  
State Universities (English as a Second  
Language)  
Thoroughbred Horse Training Center  
(Spanish speaking)  
Vietnamese Buddhist Association

For more information concerning the KOIN, please contact Barbara Fox  
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Visit our Web site at:

<http://www.chfs.ky.gov/dph/epi/preparedness/KOIN.htm>